COMIC SHOP NEWS

1205

CAPTAIN ACTION

All good things must come to an end!

EX MACHINA #50

The Final,
Double-Sized Issue of the Groundbreaking,
Critically Acclaimed Series

Written by **Brian K. Vaughan**

Illustrated by **Tony Harris**

Variant cover by **Jim Lee**

Mature Comics for Mature Readers
Comic Shop Locator Service: 1-888 COMIC BOOK

July 2010

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WILDSTORM

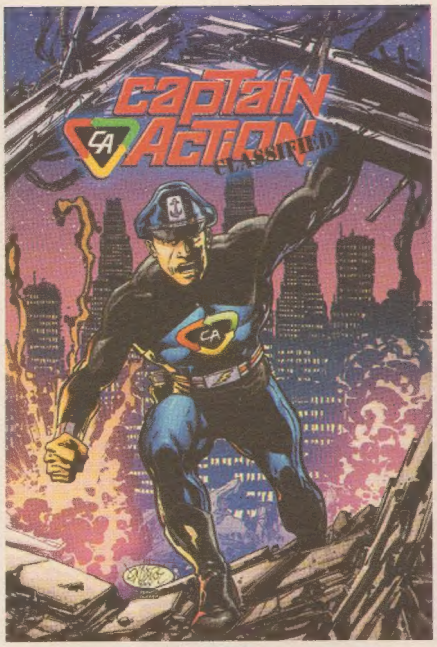
The Captain's Back in Action!

For a guy who began his hero career by wearing other people's clothes, Captain Action is amazingly long-lived. His first comics adventures debuted more than four decades ago, and he's still at it: having just wrapped up a crossover adventure co-starring the Phantom, Captain Action is about to go solo in the ongoing ***Captain Action Season Two***.

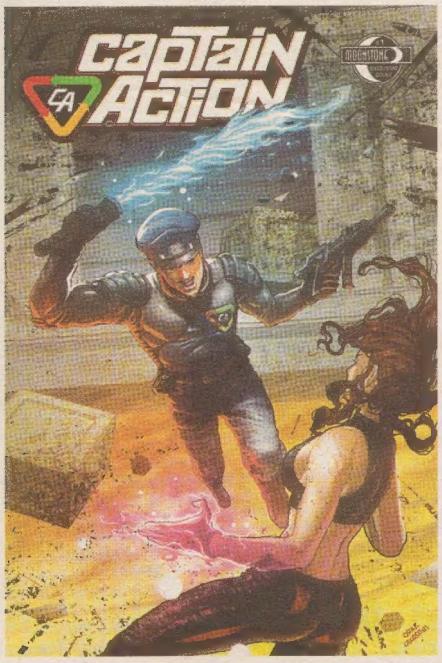
The new series, which is written by *Steven Grant*, develops the Captain Action Universe with a storyline designed to be accessible to established fans and newcomers alike. Grant explained the premise of the series to date. "The A.C.T.I.O.N. Directorate, run by Captain Action but having branches across the world, is an organization created to combat a clandestine evil organization called The Red Crawl. Using captured Crawl technology, A.C.T.I.O.N. created superpowered agents, known as the Protectorate, to be their shock troops and keep the world safe, again under the command of Captain Action—whose own powers, *not* gained via Crawl tech, allow him to duplicate the appearance and powers of any one of the Protectorate.

"What they *didn't* realize is that the Red Crawl is more in the nature of a parasitic virus than a organization, and the Protectorate was itself infected by the appropriated tech. The mini-series begins with the activation of the virus and an attack on A.C.T.I.O.N. and the apparent murder of Captain Action by the now renegade Protectorate.

"Due to this, Captain Action's son—who has previously rejected the Captain Action concept though he's the only other person who genetically has the power to gain his father's powers and take over the identity—gains his father's powers and takes over the mantle of Captain Action to destroy the Protectorate. In that arc, he and we become aware that the Red Crawl is the forward arm of an alien invasion. It also turns out Dad is okay, and together father and son stop the renegades and prevent further inroads by the aliens. Those are the basics. By the end of the mini-series, both father and son are functioning Captain Actions."



"The premise we established was 'What if you were going to fight a war, but may have already lost?'" Captain Action Enterprises' *Ed Catto* continued. "Fans seemed to really like it: Captain Action and his spy organization hadn't really won the war against the Alien Red Crawl. They just *thought* they did... It turns out- this world's version of the JLA/Avengers was taken over by aliens. And Captain Action's son, Cole, a selfish, hedonistic, failed spy is the man recruited to save the world."



What does Grant have in store for the two? "My main goal with the first six issue arc in the regular title was to start expanding the scope of the Captain Action universe," Grant said. "I also wanted to get away from the Red Crawl-aliens storyline for a bit while delving into the ancient background of the coming invasion and introducing a stronger sense of realpolitik, like the subplot of an unsuspected super-power arms race - nations using black market A.C.T.I.O.N. tech to create national superheroes of their own. I wanted to introduce various members of the A.C.T.I.O.N. organization and give a better sense of how it runs. We introduce the British distaff version of Captain Action, Lady Action, and a major new villainess not directly connected to the alien/Crawl storyline... In fact, she's a little hostile to them!

"Specifically, the story, at least in the first six issues, is about the son getting the bigger picture—something he was never let in on because until the events of the mini he had rejected any involvement, and by the time he came on board things were happening too quickly for an orientation class. There's lots of superhero action and globehopping, a nuclear explosion or two, lost civilizations, evil plots, the total defeat of Captain Action, lots of good stuff, but the main thrust is the coming of age of the new Captain Action.

"Following that is a three-issue arc illuminating some of the family history of the Captain Actions, from the Rosicrucians and the France of Louis XIII to darkest Africa and the wild west of the 19th century to McCarthy era. The three issues after that we only have a very loose idea of at the moment, but by the end of the first year it'll take everything we've been through in #1-12 and turn it back to the Crawl/alien storyline.

"My main concern when I came on is that a strict focus on that plot—though it's the *raison d'etre* for the series—is too narrow and limiting, and we'd have a much stronger connection to the characters if we expanded things. Now there will be a lot of elements in play, and that means a lot of different and hopefully surprising ways to juxtapose them."

Grant's involvement with ***Captain Action*** involves a bit of nostalgia—but it's *not* nostalgia for the 1960's action figure line that initially introduced the character. "Captain Action was one of the few characters left anywhere I still had any sort of fannish attachment to, not because of the '60s action figure but because of the version *Gil Kane* did at DC, which I loved when it came out," Grant said. This led him to finish out the initial miniseries for Moonstone, then tackle a special, "and then they asked if I'd continue on the regular series."

How do you hook new readers a book based on a 1960's action figure initially designed as little more than an action-figure-clotheshanger for various superhero costumes? "The virtue of the original action figure is that nothing can taint it, and I think most fans realize that the basic gimmick of the action figure is way beyond our grasp," Grant said. "Our character isn't going to be able to turn into Superman or Aquaman or Flash Gordon or G.I. Joe, for legal reasons. But everything implicit in the action figure remains in the new series—the character takes on a variety of identities and powers—while the mythology is new. For the longtime fan, it's still everything inherent in the character, but new readers won't even need to know an action figure ever existed... Other than that, we just hope the story and art will appeal to newcomers. Regardless of source material, the book still has to live or die on its value as a comic book, as entertainment, and hopefully we've got that angle covered."

"Captain Action endures because of the core message: 'You can be anything you want, but you're cool just being yourself too,'" *Ed Catto* added. "It's a very empowering message, and welcome for 'kids of all ages.' Everyone who's read a comic has imagined what it would be like to fly like Superman, or to be Superman. But we all have our own paths to follow, and these can be pretty cool, too."

"I'll admit there is a nostalgia factor that drives Captain Action too," Captain Action Enterprises' *Joe Ahearn* said. "The collector toy community loves Captain Action and the vintage stuff is constantly being sold and traded... On the other hand, we're on the cusp on creating a whole new generation of fans. We're just about ready to make a big Captain Action toy announcement! Both comic fans and toy collectors will love this news!"

Each issue of ***Captain Action Season Two*** will also feature a backup story starring Action Boy, written by *Rafael Nieves*. "My Action Boy stories recount the adventures of Sean Barrett—who will one day take on the mantle of Captain Action—as a young boy in the mid-60's," Nieves said. "The origins of this character are steeped in tragedy; his parents have both died, his trust has been maligned by parental or authority figures, and he finds himself displaced, living and learning

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

alongside other children who are far more well-adjusted than he.

"Sean is an outsider, both by circumstance and choice. He leads a melancholy existence, and is trying valiantly to find his place in the world. His efforts are aided, and sometimes thwarted, by his fellow students. Some of them will become important allies, and some bitter enemies.

"Sean has a lot of anger issues, abandonment issues, and this series of stories will expose them and address them as we watch his journey to become Action Boy."

In the course of the storyline, readers will find some familiar figures. "The supporting cast is made up of characters from the Captain Action Bible. Dr. Lili Roundtree, who works for the Directorate, plays a very key role in Action Boy's development, acting as a mother figure and conscience. Certainly Miles Drake, the contemporary Captain Action, will be appearing in a number of stories. And then of course, there are the sisters who both beguile and befuddle Sean, Scooter and Skipper Morgan, who are ever-present as well. All these characters are canon.

"Additionally, I have managed to create a foil for Sean in the initial stories, a boy named Dorfmeister, who, along with another character named Larry, are the primary antagonists in Sean's stories. They provide comic relief, as well as menace, to the series.

"And I should mention that Khem, the black jaguar with whom Sean has a special bond, will become a very important part of the story."

In writing the Action Boy tales, Nieves faces a storytelling challenge familiar to any writer who's chronicled the early exploits of a familiar character. "The challenge, of course, is knowing that Sean will one day become Action Boy (and we've hinted at more in the main series), so his destination as a character is very clearly delineated, which means that I have to always remember the end goal. So I can't do anything too outlandish with Sean, like, you know, kill him off!"

Since these are backup tales, Nieves must tell his story in compact installments. "The Action Boy stories are six pages long, and they will continue for as long as the powers that be wishes it to.... or until Sean becomes a well-adjusted young man, in which case I'll leave the series! I don't *do* well-adjusted!

"The six-page limit is a bit restrictive, but it really pushes me to get to the meat of the story," Nieves continued. "Not a lot of filler in the Action Boy stuff! And I've managed to, very loosely, create a format that allows me some room to play; the plan is for 3 to 4 part story arcs, with each arc ending with a clear milestone that will move Sean along on his quest to hero-dom."

Is there any chance that the Captain Action Universe might cross over with Moonstone's pulp-oriented line (which was spotlighted in ***CSN #1199***)? "It turns out that the Captain Action history stretches back far further than the 60's action figure," Catto said. "As a nod to *James Robinson's* ***Starman*** or *Lee Falk's* ***Phantom***, the Captain Action mantle has been passed down to many individuals throughout history. There have been gaps, but these historical Captain Actions give a little room to play in other genres and in other eras. So we've discussed, with *Chuck Dixon* and *Beau Smith*, doing a WWII story, teaming Captain Action some of our favorite war heroes, and we're looking into pulp crossovers, too."

In addition to ***Captain Action Season Two***, what other Captain Action projects are in the works? "In the months to come, we have our collectible trading card set and another round of Mego-sized Captain Action figures from Cast-A-Ways," Ahearn said. "And the big toy announcement we referred to earlier will be really exciting.

"On the comic side, we'll be soon announcing a companion series, ***Captain Action Classic***, featuring the 60's Captain Action in spy stories with a true-history twist. RFK, The Beatles—they'll all be there! *Paul Kupperberg's* our writer and we kick off with a great *John Byrne* cover!

The action will continue with several miniseries and specials, too. We have another ***Lady Action*** miniseries in the works; our ***Captain Action:Blud Re***d miniseries (spotlighting the sexy Russian super-assassin, Crescent); and our ***Captain Action Winter Special***, whose winter-themed stories will showcase the original Captain Action by *Beau Smith & Eduardo Barreto*, Lady Action by *Tony Lee*, and stories featuring Action Boy and Khem. Look for that one in February."

Is there any chance that the classic ***Captain Action*** series published by DC back in the 1960's might be collected by Moonstone? "What classic comics they are!" Catto enthused. "And such creators—*Wally Wood, Gil Kane, Jim Shooter.* Everyone always asks about these!

"Basically, both DC and Captain Action Enterprises have to say 'yes' to make this happen. Our friends at DC have been very supportive of all our efforts each step of the way. In fact, *Paul Levitz* gave me a ***Captain Action*** production test cover from *Julie Schwartz's* files!

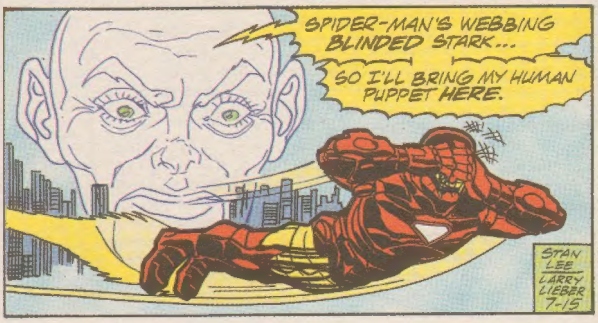
"When last we discussed the idea of reprinting the 1960's issues all the key players voted to greenlight the project. We even talked about including rarities like a *Murphy Anderson* test-sketch for a Hawkman Captain Action costume. Things got a little sticky at the top of the decision-making chain, though, and there may have been concern about Moonstone being a rival publisher. But who knows? We encourage fans to write *Dan DiDio* and *Jim Lee* and tell them they'd like to see a ***Captain Action*** reprint hardcover. And we've just started a new Facebook page focused on reprinting these classics, so folks who love *Gil Kane* art or *Wally Wood* art can join the cause there."

Captain Action Season Two #1, a $3.99 comic from Moonstone Entertainment, is scheduled for late July release.

by Cliff Biggers

SPIDER-MAN

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER



I'VE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED MY OBJECTIVE!
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COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

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5 Weeks to Die

In recent years, Marvel and DC have launched a variety of weekly projects coinciding with "five week months" (that is, months in which there are five Wednesday release days). This September, though, IDW is the publisher launching a weekly project, ***5 Days to Die***.

Created and written by *Andy Schmidt*, with art by *Chee*, ***5 Days to Die*** follows Ray Crisara, a tough cop who has to make an impossible decision. Upon surviving a terrible car accident, Ray is left a widower and his daughter is in critical condition. Believing this was a planned hit by the city's drug lord he's been pursuing, he must decide to track the killer or stay with his little girl. With a brain injury that leaves Ray less than a week to live, how will he decide to spend his last days on Earth?

"The story really developed because I like old-school action thriller movies, full of noir and suspense," Schmidt said. "*Chee* was the perfect artist to bring Ray's heartache to life and he makes every punch, bullet, tackle, and hit leap off the page and smack you in the face. If you're a fan of ***Bullet*** or the original ***Die Hard***, then this is the book for you."

Each weekly issue also sports a compelling cover from top-tier artists. *David Finch* does the honors for issue #1, *Michael Avon Oeming* for issue #2, *Ben Templesmith* opens issue #3, *Gabriele Dell'Otto* is on issue #4, and *Pablo Raimondi* rounds out issue #5.

5 Days to Die #1, a $3.99 comic, is scheduled for September 1st release.

CSNsider

•*Alex Garner* is supplying variant covers for DC's ***Justice League of America #47*** and ***Wonder Woman #601;*** each is a 1-for-10 cover, slated to arrive in stores on 7/28.

•DC has cancelled orders for three trade paperbacks. ***Red Herring TP, The Web: Spinning the Future TP*** and ***Killapalooza TP*** have been removed from DC's schedules, and it there are o plans to resolicit later on—so if you were holding off on the individual comics in lieu of the trade, now's the time to start looking for those single issues!

•***Ex Machina #50,*** originally solicited as a standard-pagecount book, has expanded to a 48-page comic with a $4.99 pricetag.

•Dynamite Entertainment has released a teaser image featuring an *Alex Ross* painting masked by the word "KIRBY." The image carried the teaser, "Kirby: Genesis is coming! Dynamite presents *Alex Ross*, and he's bringing a friend!" Presumably this ties in to last year's Dynamite announcement of plans to revive the "Kirbyverse" featuring characters whose trademarks and copyrights were solely owned by the *Jack Kirby* estate, including Captain Victory and Silver Star. "This includes everything that Jack created for Pacific, everything he created for Topps," *Nick Barrucci* said last year. "It's all going to be under one universe, the Kirbyverse." Look for more news regarding ***Kirby: Genesis*** in upcoming issues of *CSN*.

•*Joe Quesada* is supplying the art for the previously-unannounced 1-for-25 variant cover edition of ***Thor #615***, in stores in late September.

•Marvel is producing a limited match-to order incentive version of ***Namor: The First Mutant #1*** featuring sketch art by *Joe Quesada*; check with the folks at your friendly neighborhood comic shop regarding price and availability.

•The book formerly known as ***Guardians of the Globe*** has a new title: Image has renamed the miniseries ***Guarding the Globe***. Contents remain the same, though, as *Robert Kirkman, Benito Cereno, & Ransom Getty* present the story of a new superteam organized to defend the Earth in Invincible's absence.

•*Jeff Lemire*, creator of ***Sweet Tooth*** and writer of ***Brightest Day: The Atom Special***, the Atom co-feature in ***Adventure Comics***, and the upcoming ***Superboy*** series, has signed an exclusive contract with DC. "As a life long DC Comics fan, I am incredibly excited to be a part of both the DCU and of Vertigo moving forward," Lemire said. "***Sweet Tooth*** has been a labor of love for me and I couldn't have done it without the amazing support of *Karen Berger* and everyone at Vertigo. So, the opportunity to not only continue Gus and Jepperd's saga, but also take on the new ***Superboy*** monthly and the adventures of Ray Palmer, The Atom, is a dream come true for me! Both the DC and Vertigo line ups at the moment are full of amazing creators and amazing characters and I'm thrilled to have the chance to be a part of that in the years to come!"

•DC has shut down its zudacomics.com website; some Zuda features will continue to be updated at the DC Comics site.

•*Chris Ryall*, editor-in-chief at IDW, ahs been promoted to the position of Chief Creative Officer for the publisher. He will continue in his editor-in-chief role as well.

•Radical Studios is working with *Sam Worthington's* Full Clip Productions (a joint venture with Worthington, *Michael Schwarz*, and *John Schwarz*) to develop projects that will be published under the Radical banner; Worthington and Full Clip partner *John Schwarz* will star in the film adaptations of select projects.

"As a lifelong fan of comics, I'm so excited to have the chance to create material which I can then personally bring to life on screen," Worthington said. "This is a great opportunity for my partners and me to work alongside a dynamic company like Radical."

The first project in development under the imprint is ***Damaged***, created by *John Schwarz & Michael Schwarz*, and written by Eisner Award winner *David Lapham*. The story centers on two brothers committed to justice in different ways—one inside the law, one violently beyond it. Now, with the end of their careers approaching, they must train their replacements, hoping to remake each in their image.

•Showing that creators like to write about subjects they know well, *Ziggy Marley* is working with Image Comics to launch a new comic book series, ***Marijuanaman***. Look for the first issue in April of 2011, if the creative team doesn't get distracted and forget what they were working on...

Back to Press

•***Action Comics #890 2nd Printing*** (MAY108133), featuring a recolored version of the original cover by *David Finch*, in stores 7/28.

•***Amazing Spider-Man #634 2nd Printing*** (MAY108077), featuring a variant cover by *Michael Lark*, in stores 7/28.

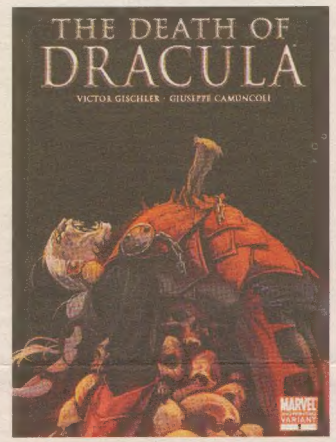
•***Amazing Spider-Man #635 2nd Printing*** (MAY108099), featuring a variant cover by *Michael Lark*, in stores 7/28.

•***American Vampire #2 2nd Printing*** (MAY108061), featuring a recolored version of the original cover by *Rafael Albuquerque*, in stores 7/21.

•***Avengers #2 2nd Printing*** (MAY108075), featuring a variant cover by *John Romita Jr.*, in stores 7/21.

•***Batman Beyond #1 2nd Printing*** (MAY108128), featuring a recolored version of the original cover by *Dustin Nguyen*, in stores 7/28.

•***Batman: Return of Bruce Wayne #1 3rd Printing*** (MAY108056), featuring a recolored version of the variant cover by *Chris Sprouse & Karl Story*, in stores 7/21.



•***Death of Dracula #1 2nd Printing*** (MAY108113), in stores 8/4.

•***Justice League: Generation Lost #1 2nd Printing***, featuring the pencil version of the original variant cover by *Kevin Maguire*, in stores 7/28.

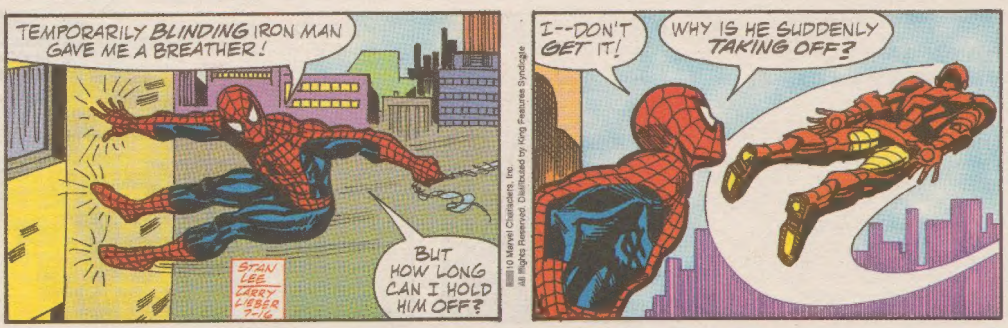
•***New Avengers #1 2nd Printing***, featuring a variant cover by *Stuart Immonen*, in stores 7/28.

•***Superman/Batman Annual #4 2nd Printing*** (MAY108079), featuring a recolored version of the original cover by *Stanley "Artgerm" Lau*, in stores 7/21. (This is the first comics appearance of the in-continuity ***Batman Beyond*** hero Terry McGinniss.)

•***Thunderbolts #145 2nd Printing*** (MAY108114), featuring cover art by *Frank Martin*, in stores 8/4.

•***Wonder Woman #600 2nd Printing*** (MAY108116), featuring a new cover by *Don Kramer & Michael Babinski*, in stores 7/28.

•***Zatanna #1 2nd Printing***, featuring a recolored version of the original cover by *Stephane Roux*, in stores 7/28.


TEMPORARILY BLINDING IRON MAN GAVE ME A BREATHER!
BUT HOW LONG CAN I HOLD HIM OFF?
STAN LEE JERRY LIEBER 7-16
I--DON'T GET IT!
WHY IS HE SUDDENLY TAKING OFF?
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ALAN MOORE NEONOMICON #1 (OF 4)

Alan Moore (W); Jacen Burrows (A)
(Avatar JUN100779 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

What happened to legendary FBI agent Aldo Sax? That's the question that Agents Brears and Lamper hope to answer... but Sax is locked away in an asylum, where he speaks in strange tongues--and before it's all over, Brears and Lamper may join him!

Why Should You Care?

Alan Moore launches a horrifying new series inspired by the *outré* works of *H.P. Lovecraft*... and we probably had you at "Alan Moore." (And with good reason!)

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #640

Joe Quesada (W); Paulo Manuel Rivera & Joe Quesada (A)
(Marvel JUN100539 $3.99)

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #641

Joe Quesada (W); Paulo Manuel Rivera & Joe Quesada (A)
(Marvel JUN100542 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

How did the world *really* forget that Peter Parker was Spider-Man? What went wrong with the wedding of Peter and Mary Jane? And what does the future hold for the couple? At last, these questions are answered!

Why Should You Care?

Joe Quesada, the man who oversaw the Mephistophelian reset that paved the way for "Brand New Day," answers the questions that fans have been asking ever since the wedding of Peter and Mary Jane went away.

BATMAN: ODYSSEY #2 (OF 6)

Neal Adams (W/A)
(DC JUN100160 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Someone is puling Batman's strings... but who? And will all of Batman's combat skills be sufficient to overcome this mystery man?

Why Should You Care?

Comics legend *Neal Adams* continues his long-awaited return to the Dark Knight as he both writes and illustrates the first of two six-part series pitting the Batman against some of his most challenging adversaries.

BOYS: HIGHLAND LADDIE #1 (OF 6)

Garth Ennis (W); John McCrea (A)
(Dynamite JUN100906 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Wee Hughie heads back home in search of some rest and relaxation... but considering the way Hughie's luck runs, you *know* that it's not going to work out that way, don't you?

Why Should You Care?

Garth Ennis launches the second of three ***Boys*** tie-in miniseries, reuniting with ***Herogasm*** artist *John McCrea* for a tale that explores the back story of one of ***The Boys'*** most popular characters while laying the groundwork for upcoming ***Boys*** tales.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: RILEY ONE SHOT

Jane Espenson (W); Karl Moline (A)
(Dark Horse JUN100042 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

It's already been revealed that Buffy's former flame, the demon-fighting soldier Riley Finn who was seemingly in league with ***Twilight***, was actually as a double agent working for the Slayer army. Now we learn the secrets of Riley's recruitment by Buffy, his infiltration of Twilight's inner circle, and what's become of him and his superspy wife, Sam.

Why Should You Care?

After a couple of ***Buffy***-less months, acclaimed TV writer *Jane Espenson* returns with a crucial tie-in that not only reveals new details about Riley's past, but also features major revelations for the remainder of ***Buffy Season Eight.***

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS #0

John Rogers & Alex Irvine (W); Andrea DiVito & Peter Bergting (A)
(IDW JUN100308 $1.00)

What's the Scoop?

Dungeons and Dragons returns to comics with this issue that features two stories introducing readers to upcoming D&D worlds, along with behind-the-scenes content.

CSN TOP CON

Why Should You Care?

Get an advance look at what IDW has in store for readers in November's ***Dungeons and Dragons #1*** and January's ***Dark Sun*** limited series... and you only have to spend a buck to get a sampling of both books!

GREEN LANTERN: EMERALD WARRIORS #1 (BRIGHTEST DAY)

Peter Tomasi (A); Fernando Pasarin (A)
(DC JUN100136 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Joined by Kilowog and Arisia, Guy Gardner begins his secret mission for Atrocitus... a mission that will bring him into conflict with Hal Jordan and will also have major repercussions for the Green Lantern Corps.

Why Should You Care?

The events of ***Blackest Night*** and ***Brightest Day*** pave the way for a third ongoing Green Lantern series as ring-wielding bad boy Guy Gardner once again gets his time in the spotlight.

GUARDING THE GLOBE #1 (OF 6)

Robert Kirkman & Benito Cerino (W); Ransom Getty (A)
(Image JUN100391 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

The Viltrumite War rages on, and that means that Invincible is busy off-planet? So who's going to protect Earth now that the ranks of the Guardians of the Globe are depleted? You might be surprised!

Why Should You Care?

Fan-favorite writer *Robert Kirkman* introduces Image's newest super-team in this six-issue limited series that also features an offbeat backup tale by *Chris Giarrusso* starring the strangest Guardians team of all (Spawn, Rick Grimes, Gary Popper, and Barack Obama)!

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #48 (BRIGHTEST DAY)

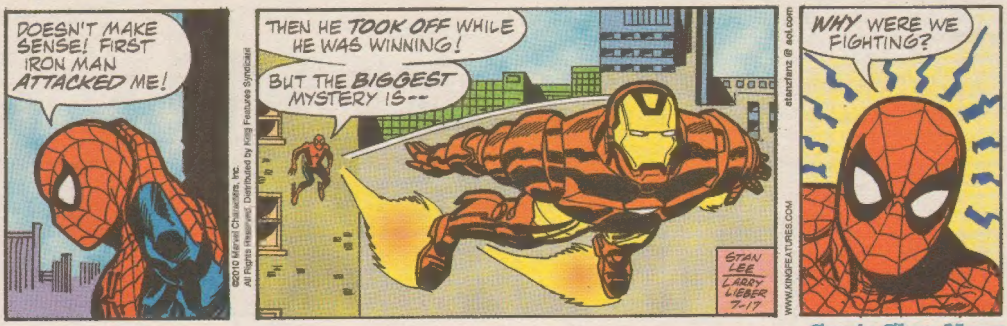
James Robinson (W); Mark Bagley, Rob Hunter, & Norm Rapmund (A)
(DC JUN100146 $3.99)

JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA #42 (BRIGHTEST DAY)

James Robinson (W); Mark Bagley, Rob Hunter, & Norm Rapmund (A)
(DC JUN100144 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Starheart makes his final bid to obliterate the good in Green Lantern's life, forcing both the Justice League and the Justice Society to seek help from the Shade. But it turns out that the greatest threat to Earth may not be Alan Scott or the Starheart, but one of the other members!


DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! FIRST IRON MAN ATTACKED ME!
THEN HE TOOK OFF WHILE HE WAS WINNING!
BUT THE BIGGEST MYSTERY IS--
WHY WERE WE FIGHTING?
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STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 7-17
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MICS: AUGUST

Why Should You Care?

James Robinson & Mark Bagley conclude the first JLA-JSA crossover adventure of the modern era with this double helping of superteam excitement (and is there any contemporary artist other than Bagley who could hope to illustrate all five parts of a biweekly superteam crossover like this?).

KICK-ASS 2: BALLS TO THE WALL #1

Mark Millar (W); John Romita Jr. (A)

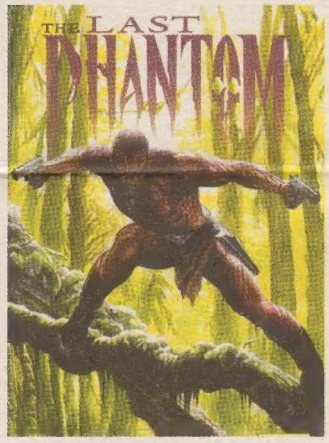
(Icon/Marvel JUN100640 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

How do criminals respond to the presence of superheroes? They assume the roles of super-villains, of course... and that's bad news for Kick Ass and Hit Girl...

Why Should You Care?

Just in time for the video release of *Kick Ass*, here comes the sequel! Talk about striking while the iron is hot!...



LAST PHANTOM #1

Scott Beatty (W); Eduardo Ferigato (with Alex Ross) (A)

(Dynamite JUN100899 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Meet Kit Walker, the last Phantom, in a contemporary series that offers a bold reinterpretation of *Lee Falk's* classic jungle hero.

Why Should You Care?

The Phantom makes his Dynamite debut in this issue, complete with a revamped origin and an updated look based on designs by the incomparable *Alex Ross*.

MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER #1 (OF 4)

Jim Shooter (W); Bill Reinhold (A)

(Dark Horse JUN100015 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

North Am seems like a technological paradise, but it's home to an underground in which human mobsters use robot muscle "thug-bots" to support their human trafficking drug dealing, and more. But where there are thug-bots, there's also a robot fighter named Magnus!...

Why Should You Care?

It's not just a relaunch of Magnus—it's a relaunch of Magnus written by comics legend *Jim Shooter*, the man who helped make Valiant's ***Magnus, Robot Fighter*** one of the biggest relaunches of the 1990s! And as a bonus, this issue also includes the original Silver Age ***Magnus #1*** by *Russ Manning*.

MARVEL UNIVERSE VS PUNISHER #1 (OF 4)

Jonathan Maberry (W); Goran Parlov (A)

(Marvel JUN100603 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

In the aftermath of a terrible plague, both humans are heroes have been transformed into cannibalistic predators. Now there's only one man with the skill to hunt down the infected heroes: the Punisher, the Last Gun on Earth.

Why Should You Care?

Take a heaping helping of ***Marvel Zombies'*** twisted horror-hero vibe, add a generous serving of the gritty Marvel Knights ***Punisher***, and you get this edgy series that lets readers cheer for Frank Castle as he takes aim on Marvel's big guns...

MORNING GLORIES #1

Nick Spencer (W); Joe Eisma (A)

(Image JUN100395 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Morning Glory Academy is one of the most prestigious prep schools in the nation... but six brilliant but troubled newcomers soon learn that nothing is what it appears to be...

Why Should You Care?

Creator *Nick Spencer* (writer of *Existence 2.0* and *Shuddertown*) blurbs this one as "***Runaways*** meets ***Lost,***" and he's making the first issue tough to resist: 44 pages of story and art for the price of a 22 page comic!

SCOURGE #1

Scott Lobdell (with Gale Anne Hurd) (W); Eric Battle (A)

(Aspen JUN100769 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

A virus outbreak transformers New York City's citizens into savage, bloodthirsty gargoyles. Now it's up to one uninfected NYPD SWAT officer to prevent the spread of the virus beyond the island while saving the city itself from utter annihilation.

Why Should You Care?

brings her imaginative vision to Aspen with this original series—and she's joined by *Scott Lobdell*, who transforms her concept into a compelling comic.

SPIDER-GIRL: THE END #1

Tom DeFalco (W); Ron Frenz (A)

(Marvel JUN100551 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Mayday Parker takes on her own clone, April, in this series finale that spans the history of the MC2 Universe.

Why Should You Care?

Tom DeFalco says farewell to his loveable next-generation heroine with an extra-length oneshot that captures the excitement of Marvel's Silver Age with a near-future twist.

STAR WARS: BLOOD TIES—TALE OF JANGO & BOBA FETT #1

Tom Taylor (W); Chris Scalf (A)

(8/25 Dark Horse JUN100053 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

Shortly before the start of the Clone Wars, Count Dooku sends Jango Fett on a mission that will affect the course of Boba Fett's life some twenty years later. But for now, neither of them knows what the future holds in store—and they're too busy dodging monsters and fighting bad guys to think about it!

Why Should You Care?

It's a family affair!... Two of the most popular supporting cast members in the *Star Wars* saga unite at last in this father-and-son saga.

SUPERMAN: THE LAST FAMILY OF KRYPTON #1 (OF 3)

Cary Bates (W); Renato Arlem (A)

(DC JUN100173 $4.99)

What's the Scoop?

You know the story: exploding planet, rocketship to Earth, red sun, super-powers.... but this time, there's a twist. The rocketship is large enough to carry not only Kal-El, but also Jor-El and Lara. How does Earth respond to the arrival of a super-family looking to make Earth their new home?

Why Should You Care?

There are two reasons to celebrate this limited series: first, it marks the return of *Cary Bates* to the Man of Steel, a character with whom he has long been associated. Second, it marks the return of Elseworlds tales after far too long an absence!

FOLLOWING HIS SCUFFLE WITH IRON MAN, PETER RETURNS TO MJ'S ARMS...
WHY DID TONY STARK SUDDENLY START TEARING UP NEW YORK?
HE'S DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO PROTECTING HUMANITY.
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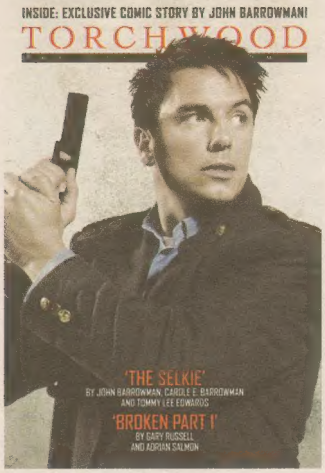

INSIDE: EXCLUSIVE COMIC STORY BY JOHN BARROWMAN!
TORCHWOOD
'THE SELKIE'
BY JOHN BARROWMAN, CAROLE E. BARROWMAN AND TOMMY LEE EDWARDS
'BROKEN PART I'
BY GARY RUSSELL AND ADRIAN SALMON

TORCHWOOD #1

John & Carole Barrowman and Garry Russel (W); Tommy Lee Edwards and Adrian Salmon (A)
(Titan JUN101106 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

In the lead story, mysterious deaths strike a remote Scottish island... deaths so mysterious that Torchwood is brought in to investigate. Then, in the second story, Jack, Gwen and Ianto find themselves trapped in a cosmic hotel.

Why Should You Care?

Because the lead story is cowritten by none other than Captain Jack himself! That's right, John Barrowman is joined by his sister Carole for an original *Torchwood* tale!

ULTIMATE COMICS AVENGERS 3 #1 (OF 6)

Mark Millar (W); Steve Dillon (A)
(Marvel JUN100533 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Someone.. or something... is leaving behind a bloody trail of mayhem distinguished by piercing bit marks. And since Blade is involved, you can probably figure out who the bad guys are... and this is going to add a new dimension to the Avengers' wetworks operations!

Why Should You Care?

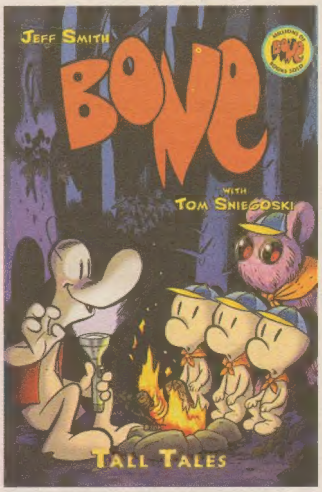
Mark Millar is joined by artist *Steve Dillon*, who makes his Ultimate Marvel debut with this limited series that introduces vampires to the Ultiverse.

Collected Cool: August's Best Reprint Volumes

ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY HC VOL 1

(DC MAR100247 $39.99)

Thrill to the earliest adventures of the Boy of Steel in this collection of Superboy stories from *More Fun #101-107* and *Adventure #103-121*.



BONE: TALL TALES TP/HC

(Cartoon JUN100889/88, $10.99/$22.99)

Jeff Smith & Tom Sniegoski present tales of the origins of Boneville, now available in full color to complement the *Bone* volumes.

MARVEL MASTERWORKS: ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE HC VOL 3

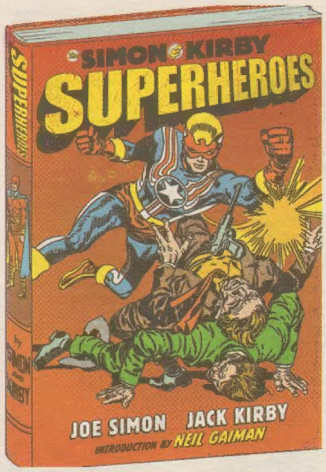
(Marvel MAR100619 $59.99)

At the same time that *Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, Dick Ayers, Don Heck,* and other Marvel greats were laying the groundwork for the Marvel Universe, they were also producing this memorable monster/SF/fantasy tales! This volume includes stories originally printed in *Tales of Suspense #s 21-31*.

SHOWCASE PRESENTS THE DOOM PATROL TP VOL 2

(DC MAY100193 $19.99)

Collecting *Doom Patrol #s 100-121*, including the history-making "Death of the Doom Patrol." If you've never experienced these offbeat tales by *Arnold Drake & Bruno Premiani*, you're in for a treat!



SIMON & KIRBY'S SUPERHEROES HC

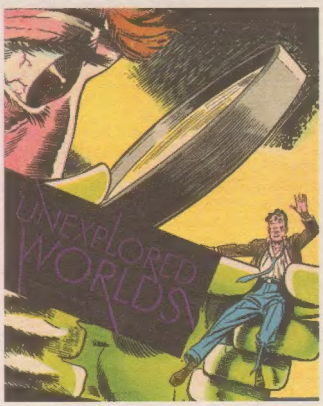
(Titan APR101071 $49.95)

Steve Saffel's comprehensive *Joe Simon-Jack Kirby* reprint program continues with this hefty volume compiling every non-Marvel or DC superhero tale by Simon & Kirby (including *Fighting American* tales never reprinted before!), all reproduced to the highest level of quality

STEVE DITKO ARCHIVES HC VOL 2: UNEXPLORED WORLDS

(Fantagraphics JUN101001 $39.99)

Before he came to Marvel, *Steve Ditko* created scores of fantasy, SF, and horror tales for Avon, Charlton, and other publishers. This volume offers a second helping of rarely-seen Ditko tales from the 1950s



VANGUARD FRAZETTA CLASSICS TP/HC VOL 1: JOHNNY COMET

(Vanguard JUN101146/MAY101156 $24.95/$39.95)

Frank Frazetta's legendary comic strip is collected once again—but for the first time, these strips are reprinted from *Frank Frazetta's* personal artist's proofs, making this the highest-quality package of this strip ever to see print.

FYI: Must-Have Additions to Your Reference Library

ART OF NEAL ADAMS TP/HC

(Vanguard JUN101145/MAY101155 $24.95/$39.95)

This long-overdue look at the art of the comics legend includes classic and rare works spanning Adam's career, along with a unique selection of Neal's seldom-seen paintings, fully annotated by the artist. The hardcover includes 16 full color pages not available in the trade paperback.

DAN BRERETON: THE GODDESS & THE MONSTER HC

(Image JUN100404 $29.99)

Dan Brereton collects his best work for the very first time in this 144-page hardcover.

DANIEL CLOWES: CONVERSATIONS SC

(University Press of Mississippi MAY101248 $22.00)

This collection of interviews spanning two decades offers an intriguing look into the career of one of independent comics' most innovative creators.

IRON MAN SAID ONE STRANGE THING JUST BEFORE OUR FIGHT.
WHAT'S THAT?
I COULD SWEAR I HEARD HIM SAY... "AS YOU WISH!"
LIKE HE WAS TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO'S CONTROLLING HIM!
AND I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHO!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 7-20
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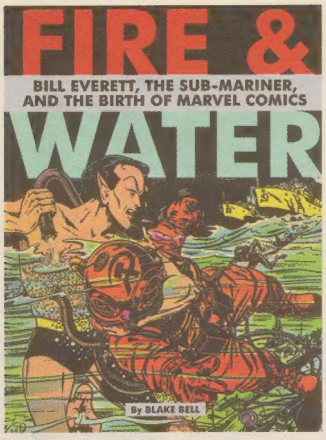

FIRE & WATER: BILL EVERETT—BIRTH OF MARVEL HC

(Fantagraphics JUN101000 $39.99)

Blake Bell, author of the acclaimed *Steve Ditko* biography, presents a definitive look at the life of the man who created the Sub-Mariner—and this book is produced with the cooperation of Everett's family, making it a must-have for anyone who appreciates comics history.

ICONS: DC & WILDSTORM ART OF JIM LEE HC

(Titan JUN101110 $39.95)

This hefty volume offers page after page of *Jim Lee* pencils, sketches, and rarities, along with a 10-page ***Legion of Super-Heroes*** story written by *Paul Levitz*, available nowhere else!

Hot Commodities: August's Hottest Merchandising & Collectibles

GREEN LANTERN 1/2 SCALE BUST

(DC Direct JAN100394 $299.99)

This modern interpretation of the heroic test pilot-turned-hero is dressed in an authentic fabric replica of his modern-day costume; mounted on a museum-style, pedestal display base, this mixed-media piece measures approximately 13" high

LYNDA CARTER AS WONDER WOMAN BUST

(DC Direct JAN100378 $80.00)

Lynda Carter's quintessential portrayal of Wonder Woman is presented in bust form. Taking her trademark bullets and bracelets pose, the Amazon princess is perched atop a base with a star theme reminiscent of the popular 1970s TV show.

BLACKEST NIGHT SERIES 5 BLACK LANTERN BATMAN ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct JAN100385 $24.00)

BLACKEST NIGHT SERIES 5 BLACK LANTERN DEADMAN ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct JAN100388 $24.00)

BLACKEST NIGHT SERIES 5 BLACK LANTERN HAWK-MAN ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct JAN100387 $24.00)

BLACKEST NIGHT SERIES 5 BLACK LANTERN NEKRON ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct JAN100386 $24.00)

BLACKEST NIGHT SINESTRO CORP MONGUL DELUXE ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct JAN100379 $30.00)

DC Direct adds five more ***Blackest Night*** action figures, including the must-have ***Black Lantern Batman*** and ***Black Lantern Nekron*** figures.

THOR CLASSIC MINI-BUST

(Bowen JUN101616 $80.00)

THOR MODERN MINI-BUST

(Bowen JUN101617 $80.00)

No matter which Thor is your favorite—the Jack Kirby Silver Age classic or the modern revamp—you can add a God of Thunder to our collection with these striking busts.

Check 'Em Out: Books You *Should* Be Reading

ACTION COMICS #892

(DC JUN100174 $3.99)

Paul Cornell continues his storyline focusing on Lex Luthor and his all-consuming quest for power as the ingenious mastermind crosses paths with Deathstroke. And as an added treat, this issue features a new Superboy tale by *Jeff Lemire & Pier Gallo*, the creative team of the upcoming ***Superboy*** ongoing series.

ARCHIE #612

(Archie JUN100752 $2.99)

Tom DeFalco continues Archie's Man from RIVERDALE adventures as the red-haired hero faces a zombie showdown.

BATMAN: RETURN OF BRUCE WAYNE #5 (OF 6)

(DC JUN100157 $3.99)

Bruce Wayne finds himself on the hard-boiled streets of Gotham City's past as the saga by Grant Morrison & Ryan Sook continues.

SMURFS GN VOL 1: THE PURPLE SMURF

(PaperCutz JUN101067 $5.99)

Young readers have been looking for Smurf books for years, and at long last they're here! This debut volume introduces readers to the Smurf village, and features two Smurf-tastic stories.

TIME MASTERS: VANISHING POINT #2 (OF 6)

(DC JUN100182 $3.99)

Already lost in the time stream while searching for the missing Caped Crusader, Rip Hunter and his ad hoc Time Masters (Booster Gold, Superman and Green Lantern) may not live long enough to make it out of the barbaric age in which they find themselves, even with the help of Claw the Conqueror.

TRUE BLOOD #2

(IDW JUN100313 $3.99)

Trapped inside the mystically-sealed Merlotte's by a soul-sucking spirit, Sookie Stackhouse is forced to reveal her deepest, most shameful secret to save the lives of Bill and her friends. But will Sookie's shame be enough to satisfy the spirit?

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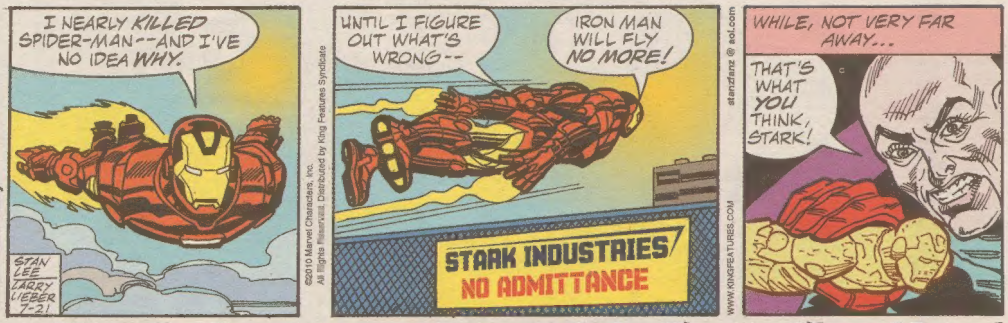
I NEARLY KILLED SPIDER-MAN--AND I'VE NO IDEA WHY.
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 7-21
Colors: Ward Batty
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